

The Resilient Library Newsletter

March 7, 2021

Volume 6, Issue 1

22 Practical Tips for Finding a Silver Lining During Difficult Times

PLEASE NOTE:

Many of the images and underlined text in this newsletter have hyperlinks to their corresponding websites.

Press Click or Ctrl+click on images and underlined text to be directed to those websites.

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By Heather S. Lonczak, Ph.D.

There are many ways for each of us to find a silver lining in the most taxing of circumstances.

Here are 22 examples.

1. Be optimistic

Learned optimism is a skill linked to motivation. Those who are optimistic tend to engage in constructive effort; whereas, disengagement from effort is more typical of pessimists.

Given the numerous benefits of optimism, increasing this powerful construct is worth the effort.

2. Practice compassion

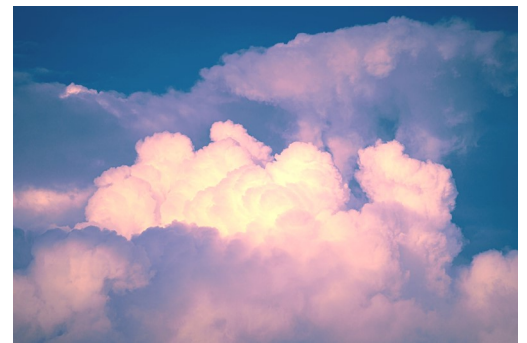
Compassion toward others is not only moral and kind, but its benefits extend to both the giver and the recipient. Or as noted by the Dalai Lama:

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.

Compassion is like an elixir that promotes gratitude, wellbeing, and, of course, the ability to see a silver lining.

3. Do service work

Helping others is a practical way to put one's compassion to work. In doing so, people tend to think less about themselves while interacting with those who are less fortunate. Service work is a great way to enhance gratitude and a



positive outlook while supporting one's community.

4. Be grateful

Gratitude has an amazing ability to energize coping and positivity during the bleakest of times.

When facing challenges, appreciating valued aspects of life has a way of putting things into a more manageable perspective.

5. Recognize self-fulfilling prophecies

Be wary of the story you tell yourself, as you may find yourself acting it out. For example, a man who repeatedly tells himself that he is unathletic will end up avoiding healthy behaviors such as exercising. Such a mindset obscures the man's ability to see the many good things about himself and that he has been physically fit in the past.

6. Question your thinking

It is common for people to get caught

See **Silver Lining** on page 2

up in the maladaptive cycle of believing their own thoughts, no matter how unrealistic or unfounded they may be. Individuals have to question their beliefs and thoughts [to] make them lose their power if they are false.

7. Learn when to approach a situation with acceptance, courage, and wisdom

This idea is beautifully articulated by the Serenity Prayer as follows:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.

Although often associated with 12-step groups, the Serenity Prayer applies to all parts of life.

Consider, for example, someone having a tough time during a pandemic. In this case, a person may find relief in acceptance (e.g., this pandemic will be here for some time), courage (e.g., doing the necessary things to stay safe), and wisdom (e.g., having a good understanding of what is controllable and what is not).

Knowing when to let go versus take action promotes both empowerment and hope in many situations.

8. Find things to look forward to

If you are looking toward the future and are not excited about anything, then it's time to find something to look forward to.

It doesn't need to be elaborate or



expensive; it should just be something that will make you feel happy. Looking forward to something meaningful provides hope in the face of gloom.

9. Consider it a challenge

Perspective is everything. If a person is given a big task at work for which they feel woefully underqualified, seeing the assignment as an exciting opportunity to learn makes it feel less like a burden and more like an opportunity for growth.

10. Remember your prior successes

When we get bogged down by a situation, it may be easy to forget our capabilities. Finding a silver lining is aided by remembering prior successes, which enhances confidence and self-efficacy.

Along these lines, remembering that you have found silver linings in the past is yet another reminder of your inner resilience.

11. Find good role models

Fortunately, optimism is contagious. By surrounding yourself with people who inspire you and see the glass as half full, this perspective is likely to rub off on you as well.

12. Be a socially responsible leader

The ability to find silver linings is

essential in all aspects of life, including work.

13. Model a positive attitude for your children

Given that optimism is learned, parents are responsible for showing their children how to see the good side of things. By modeling such positivity, parents better equip their kids

with important coping tools.

14. Practice authoritative parenting

An authoritative parenting style is assertive, but not intrusive; demanding, but responsive; and supportive in terms of discipline, but not punitive.

15. Watch out for 'What If' thinking

A chronic case of the 'What ifs' never did anyone much good. When we always think about *what might have happened*, we often find ourselves overcome with regret as we ruminate over perceived mistakes.

This is a counterproductive endeavor, as we can't change the past. Instead of getting bogged down by *What ifs*, try to instead reflect upon *what you might do now* to make things better.

16. Avoid catastrophizing

Catastrophizing is a cognitive distortion in which a situation is overblown or future expectations are considered bleak.

It is similar to the *What ifs* in terms of worrying over hypothetical situations, although it is directed toward the future.

Of course, we can't know the future, and expecting the worst only

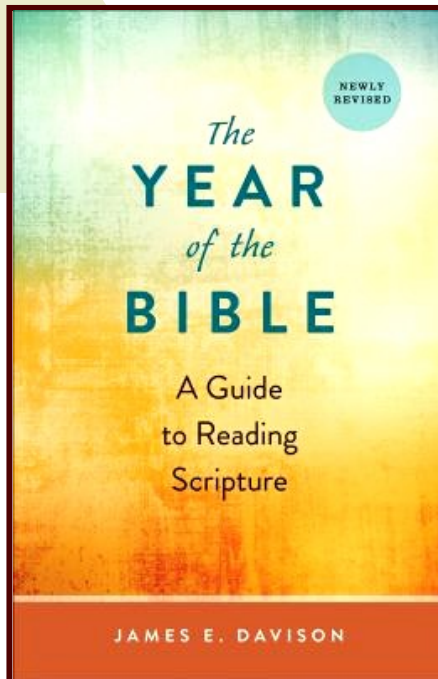
Just Added to the Collection

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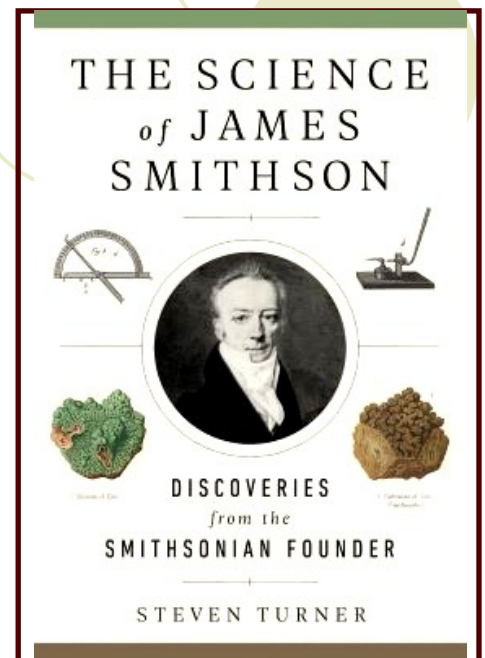
Click on book images to be directed to the library catalog



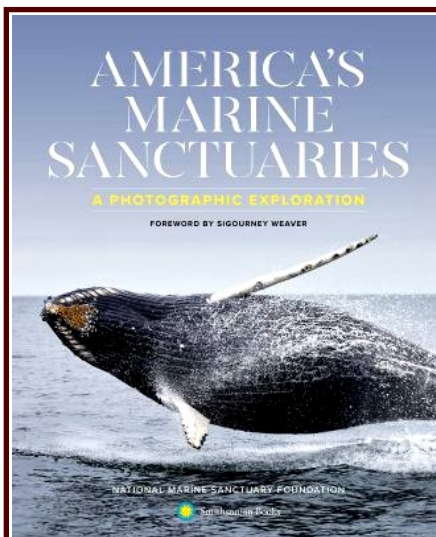
A how-to guide for planning, creating, and using creative spaces for needlework of all kinds as well as other crafts. This book includes extensive photography of outstanding artist studios.



The Year of the Bible is suitable for participants in a congregational program or anyone who wants a well-designed program to read through Scripture in the course of one year.



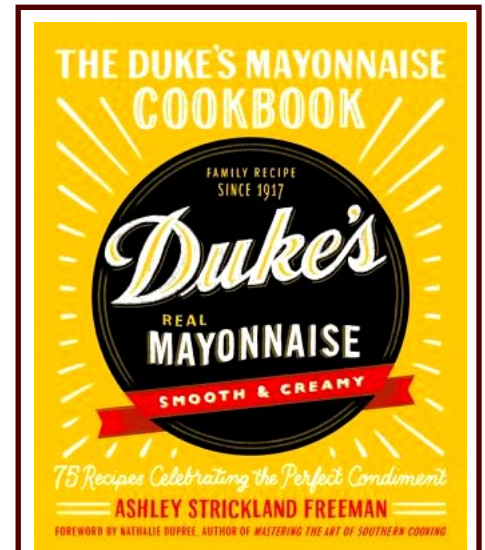
An exploration of the scientific career of James Smithson, who left his fortune to establish the Smithsonian Institution.



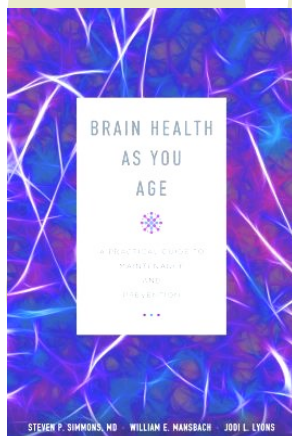
An extraordinary illustrated overview of the National Marine Sanctuary System and a guide to its fourteen protected underwater locations.



The information in this book will help you formulate your plan and save you time and money, whether you create your own estate plan or go to a lawyer for assistance.



The Duke's Mayonnaise Cookbook is a compilation of recipes inspired by author Ashley Freeman's travels across the country. And with stories and testimonials from beloved well-known chefs and food writers.



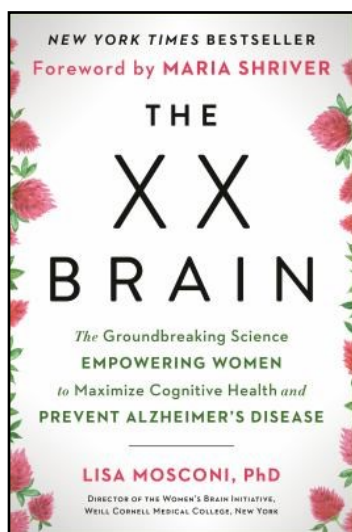
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Book Spotlight—*Brain Health as You Age* *A Practical Guide to Maintenance and Prevention*

Have you ever spent 10 minutes looking for your reading glasses, and they were on the top of your head? Or, have you walked into a room and forgotten why you went there? Most people, even younger ones, have had these experiences but when should such instances be something of concern? What are the normal signs of aging? Is there anything you can do to maintain your brain health as you age?

Brain Health as You Age provides useful, achievable actions you can take to reduce your risk of brain function decline, accurate information about identifying problems, and real solutions. The authors offer useful anecdotes and scientifically validated information -- important tools in separating myth from reality. The authors separate fact from fiction to ensure that recommendations are evidence-based, practical, useful, achievable, and measurable.

Written by a world-renowned cognitive specialist, an extraordinary house-call physician, and an award-winning author on eldercare issues, this book addresses both normal and abnormal decline and best practices for addressing both. Brain health, cognitive impairment, and mood disorders are serious issues. This book is an accessible starting point for understanding healthy brain aging and when to seek help. It's never too soon to start preventing cognitive decline, or understanding it once it's begun, and this book offers the perfect entry point for readers young and old.



Available at
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Book Spotlight—*The XX Brain* *The Groundbreaking Science Empowering Women to Maximize Cognitive Health and Prevent Alzheimer's Disease*

Taking on all aspects of women's health, including brain fog, memory lapses, depression, stress, insomnia, hormonal imbalances, and the increased risk of dementia, Dr. Mosconi introduces cutting-edge, evidence-based approaches to protecting the female brain, including a specific diet proven to work for women, strategies to reduce stress, and useful tips for restorative sleep. She also examines the controversy about soy and hormonal replacement therapy, takes on the perils of environmental toxins, and examines the role of our microbiome. Perhaps best of all, she makes clear that it is never too late to take care of yourself.

The XX Brain is a rallying cry for women to have full access to information regarding what is going on in their brains and bodies as well as a roadmap for the path to optimal, lifelong brain health.



Materials

- White glue
- Food Coloring or Liquid Watercolors
- Toothpicks
- Plastic Lids (Lids from tubs of yogurt, hummus, sour cream, etc. work best, although metal lids also work)
- Hole Punch
- String

Instructions

Step One—Pour a generous amount of glue into one of your plastic lids and swish it around to cover the entire inner surface.

Step Two—Put one or two drops of each color of food coloring around the glue.

Step Three—Use a toothpick to swirl the colors around in the glue. Stop swirling before the colors get too combined or the final result will be muddy and brown.

Step Four—Let dry. As the colors settle they will continue to expand and create a dyed psychedelic effect. Depending on how much glue you used, the suncatcher will take one to three days to fully dry. You will know when the edges start to peel off the lid.

Step Five—When fully dry, peel the suncatcher off the lid, punch a hole through the top, add a string, and hang in a sunny spot.

Excerpted from [DIY Suncatcher: How to Make Cosmic Suncatchers - Babble Dabble Do](#)





Salem Public Library

28 E Main Street
Salem VA 24153

Phone: 540-375-3089

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Email: library@salemva.gov

Website: [https://](https://www.salemva.gov/departments/salem-public-library)

[www.salemva.gov/](https://www.salemva.gov/departments/salem-public-library)

[departments/salem-public-library](https://www.salemva.gov/departments/salem-public-library)

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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: If you would like to subscribe to our newsletter, please let us know by either:

- Calling the library between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. each day OR
- Email us at library@salemva.gov OR
- Print copies will be available in our front lobby.

We will post a link on our [website home page](#) to view this newsletter online. Archived versions of the online version are posted on our website on the Adult Resources page.

LIBRARY SERVICES/EVENTS BEING OFFERED AT THIS TIME:

CONTACT-FREE PICKUP is available in our front lobby every day from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for picking up requested items. Please call before heading to the library so that we can check out your items to your account before you get here. *Thank you!*

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Silver Lining—continued from page 2

diminishes a person's self-efficacy and likelihood of experiencing joy.

17. Know your triggers

We all have triggers for a variety of emotions. If you consistently feel hopeless and pessimistic in particular situations (e.g., after watching the news or in certain social situations), recognize these triggers and find ways to avoid or manage them in the future.

18. Use positive mantras

Mantras consist of sounds or phrases that when repeated are useful in guiding thoughts in a desired direction. For example, a person who is having difficulty with self-confidence might repeat the mantra "*I am fully capable and competent*" each morning.

Using mantras is a simple technique that has been found to be beneficial for both physical and emotional health.

19. Practice forgiveness

When a person is preoccupied with feelings of anger at others, they are less open to experiencing a sense of optimism. Not only does letting go through forgiveness free a person from resentment, but it is also associated with better psychological and health-related outcomes.

20. Do the things that bring you joy

Even during the most difficult times, the ability to get involved in activities that make you happy is essential for enhancing wellbeing. Such activities need not be costly, and even by watching a sunset, a person is reminded of the beauty that exists in

nature.

21. Practice healthy life habits

Persistent negativity is exacerbated by unpleasant physical sensations such as fatigue or feeling run down.

By eating a healthy diet and getting adequate sleep, it is easier to feel positive when facing a challenge.

22. Start each day with positivity

Everyone is familiar with the expression: "woke up on the wrong side of the bed." However, starting the day with a deep breath and peaceful, optimistic thoughts may shift a day's trajectory into a more encouraging direction. □

Excerpted from [36 Ways to Find A Silver Lining During Challenging Times](#) (positivepsychology.com)